GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2171
ANSWERED ON:14.08.2006
ADVERSE EFFECTS OF GM CROPS
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Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of cattle have died due to consuming seeds, leaves, stems etc. of the Bt Cotton in various parts of the country particularly in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the reaction of the Government thereto;

(d) whether the Government had examined the adverse effects of the GM Crops on the human being and cattle before giving permission for their commercial cultivation;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA)

(a) to (c): No report has been received from Government of Andhra Pradesh about death of large number of cattle due to consumption of seeds, leaves, stems etc. of the Bt. Cotton. However, Government of Andhra Pradesh has reported death of 132 sheep in Ippagudem and Atmakur villages of Warangal District after grazing in Bt. Cotton fields. Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken necessary curative steps by providing symptomatic and supportive treatment to control the mortality and to avoid economic losses to the farmers. In view of the suspicion, the sheep growers were advised not to graze their sheep in such fields.

(d) to (f): Bt. Cotton is the only transgenic crop approved for commercial cultivation in India. The approval for commercial cultivation of Bt. cotton hybrids has been given by Genetic Engineering Approval Committee of the Ministry of Environment & Forests on the basis of environmental safety and food & feed safety assessments, including its impact on animal and human health. Further, studies conducted by National Dairy Research Institute, Karnal and Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow have not found any adverse effects of Bt cotton seeds on animal health.